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1905

MY FIRST BOOK

By L. ARAY

There is truth in poetry.

Price 25 Cents

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There is truth
in poetry.

PRICE TWENTY-FIVE CENTS.

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1905

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SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR.

I was born in the city of Nashville, Tenn., on the Cumberland river, June 29, 1875. My parents were of moderate circumstances, my father was a practicing physician and a graduate of Ann Arbor Medical College, also a graduate of the Cincinnati College of Medicine.

My father died at the age of 63 in Earlington, Kentucky, where he had gone to take charge of a village school for his health. I was just eight years old when he died and left mother with six children to clothe and care for.

Later in life, I went to Mississippi with my mother, where I enrolled as a student of Alcorn Agricultural and Mechanical College, a school for the colored male youths of Mississippi. I continued as a student for a few years until force of circumstances compelled me to start into the world for myself.

I traveled from place to place two years and drifted about until I came to Ohio and accepted employment with a firm in Columbus in the year 1898 and am at present employed by the same firm.

My second book will follow this publication, after having thoroughly put this one before the public eye.

Writing so that all may understand,
Is *one* great thing some writers do not do;
But in these simple lines I weave a band
So clear that childish eyes see through and through.

Trusting that the reader may find pleasure in the perusal of *my first book,* and hoping I may receive a helping hand from you, I am, Yours sincerely,

LANGSTON ARAY.

MY FIRST BOOK.

CHILDHOOD.

It's fun
To run
In sun —
When young
And stroll when morning's new.

Air fills
The tills
Of nature's ills
Like flowers sprayed with dew.

While young
Make one
Example done
And close to nature be.

Let face
Be bright
The heart
Be light
With childish joy and glee.

Then play
And work
But never shirk
Your duties through the day.

With ease
Of breeze,
That moves
The leaves,
Have patience all the way.

DON'T KNOCK.

O Man! O Man!
Most worthy son
Of decryology;
You should be made of better stuff
Than science of "knockology."

A PUNISHED PUN.

A story of the butter
And a story of the fly:
Would give you comprehension,
If someone would reply.

The fly was on the butter
And the butter on the fly:
If the butter had the wings on it
It couldn't help but fly.

They say the little wooly worm,
Or caterpillar spry —
That creeps along the trees of shade,
Make every butter-fly.

Now, if he makes the butterfly
He ought to be a fly:
But if he hasn't got the wings,
Where does the butterfly?

On buckwheat cakes, hot biscuits,
On batter cakes, in pies;
This pun is understanding
The fly in butterflies.

KEEP ON.

Where there's no fault,
There is no cause to falter;
While you are doing well,
Shun the halter.

GOOD FRINDS.

Money and "good friends" go hand in hand;
They number to millions, as oceans to sand.
The grains are the friends
And the ocean is you —
When *your* money is gone
You can't borrow a "sou."
Though the ocean recedes
And the waters, so blue,
Go out in the distance
And leave sands anew;
It returns with a welcome
From whence it did come,
But your money, when gone,
Seldom comes back to you.

THE TRUSTS.

They shall drop as old Lucifer dropped from above;
With a wonderful crash, they shall crumble to dust.
While now they are flying
Like the swift-winged dove,
Far over the heads of the people — unjust!
In obscurity they shall be classed with the chaff,
In the depths of a bottomless pit they shall slumber;
There they shall pay equal for their thieving wrath,
They shall know no waking to life's untold number.

THE IVY.

Creeping along the ground
With leaves so green and round,
Not seeing a sight
Not hearing a sound
While creeping along the ground.

Close to the fence it grows
Or down where the brooklet flows
The little blue eyes
Look to the skies
While creeping along the ground.

It grows with a smiling face
And the roots to the soft earth lace;
Hiding heads so low
Little flowers do blow
While creeping along the ground.

ARAY.

SOME PEOPLE.

There are people who think they are wise;
They have many things to learn.
There are people who have many eyes,
Seeing everything that turns.
There are people who would not retain
Their good prosperity
If you could stamp it on their brain
'Twould fall with swift velocity.

There are people who are prying
For some flaw in you to find;
And you find them ever sighing
If your business they can't mind.
There are people, many people
Who'd take every cent you had
And make a jackass of you sure,
They'd put you *"to the bad."*

There are people like a leaky pail,
Their capacity is *air;*
Their daliy toil of jabber gail
Is blowing, going everywhere.
There are people with the coming styles
For the season, e'er they be.
There are people with the Chadwick smiles
Dame innocent par tee!

There are people that are like you,
There are people that are like me.
There are people that we know not,
These are people that there be.

MY KITTY.

I have a girl named Kitty,
She's only a country lass;
Some people say she's giddy,
But she's not of that low class;
She's not much of a beauty,
Or a night owl, don't you see,
That's why I love my Kitty
She's the only girl for me.

When I take her to an opera,
Or on a social call,
She dresses neat, from head to feet,
And smiles a smile on all;
The boys all do adore her
She's as loving as can be.
That's why I love my Kitty,
She's the only girl for me.

LOCAL MARKETS.

FRUITS.

The *apple* hangs upon a limb
In yonder orchard's tree,
And moves its little shiny face
As if it could but see:
The heavy winds are blowing
And the rain is pouring down,
That *apple* is seen to falter —
Breaks loose! — falls to the ground.

From Southern climes, far, far away,
Far from Ohio's banner,
There comes the most delicious fruit,
The yellow skinned bananna.

Old California has the lead
In fruits — by million crates —
Lemons, mangoes, limes and *oranges,*
Pineapples, pears, malaga grapes.

In any of our states of note,
We find the lucious *cherry;*
And in the State of Illinois,
The finest of *strawberries.*

Then we come to the *cranberry* —
In the Northern States it grows;
This is all I have to tell you,
The fruit story now shall close.

VEGETABLES.

The *butter beans,*
The *kidney beans,*
The beans I do not mention;
The sweet, snap beans,
And Navy beans,
All have my kind attention.

The blood-red *beets* are growing
With their bodies in a row,
And the *cabbage* head is coming,
And the *lettuce* is aglow.

When the summer breeze is upon you
And the wind is still and low,
Carrots, *radishes*, and *onions*,
Sage and *mint* and *squashes* grow.

When old winter's chill is upon you
And we feel so worn and blue,
Give to us a stalk of *celery*,
For it makes our nerves feel new.

Our dear old friend — *sweet potato*,
In its warm bed beneath the vine,
Grows with a multiplying ratio —
Where you plant one, you may find nine.

Through our gardens of Ohio,
There's a plant that grows about,
It's a plant I never tasted
And we call it *Brussels sprout*.

Oh! that slimy, sticky *okra*,
On a stalk of green they grow;
Like a glue it fastens to you,
This is true, because I know.

And the *rhubarb* is expressly
For those pies I can't describe,
They will make you very restless
If you get too much inside.

I shall end all in a trio,
Staple things I shan't leave out;
Turnips and the *Irish potatoes*
And *tomatoes* — our devouts.

BUTTER, POULTRY AND EGGS.

O the butter, the chickens, the turkeys,
The ducks and the most precious eggs
Are ever our needful articles,
And the oysters without eyes or legs.

GRAIN.

The *corn* we can not do without,
And the *oats* are forever in use.
The *salt* must be put in the bread,
And the *meal* makes our appetites stout.

GROCERIES AND PROVISIONS.

Sugar in the *coffee*,
Biscuits in the pan,
Bacon on the table.
Lard is in the can.

HIDES.

Steer and *cow hides* in a row,
Stags, *sheep*, *calf skins*, *horse hides* go.

GAME.

English and French Partridge,
English and French Plover,
French Grouse and Egyptian Quail,
Hunting season is now over.

FISH AND GAME.

White, Lake Erie Pickerel and Trout,
Perch, Lake Herring and Cat Fish about
Blue Fish, Ocean Trout, Lobsters and Crabs,
Sea Trout, Salmon, Halibut, Shad.

VENISON.

Roast and *steaks* — *Steaks* and *roasts* —
But common "cow" is good for most.

FLOUR.

Patent, cooped or well prepared,
Straight or clean makes us feel glad.

HAY.

Timothy, Timothy always in need,
And many a farmer buys back his own seed.

THE SPIDER AND BUTTERFLY.

The insect flits
'Midst flowery pits,
Sweet fragrance to be taken;
With fluttering wing,
They softly sing
Sweet songs — their own creation.

THE SPIDER.

While thus they sip,
The spider sits
Upon his bright webbed mansion;
His feet entwined
And eyes that shine,
Stretch open their expansion.

In shady spots
Ruthless they stop,
Their homes to build so neatly,
On vines so lush
The sweet scents rush
And fill the air completely.

Those little limbs,
Those little eyes,
As vicious as old Satan's,
Strike with a weight
That cannot make
The lives of insects gladdened.

THE BUTTERFLY.

The butterfly
May flutter by,
Forgetting all its beauty;
Into the trap
Its fans do flap,
All moist with dew and honey.

All but to gain
Free life again,
In sweet, quiet solitude;
All worried out
No sound about,
Life — stilled in dying mode.

THE SPIDER.

He moves about
His web so stout;
Fears he not, the intruder;
The yarns wound round
The prisoner bound,
Cease wings — that were resisting.

Back to his place
He slinks with grace,
When life is all exhausted;
Then in a rave
That cures his crave
He bounds upon the victim.

THE BUTTERFLY.

Life blood ebbs away,
While spider gay
Is cutting off the pleasures
Of nature seen,
The insect queen
With lives too short to measure.

HIS GIRL AND BOY.

His heart is filled with gladness
When his daily work is done;
For he's thinking of his loved ones
His daughter and his son.

The little girl is Esther
With eyes that dart and gleam;
And the soul is never restless
Of the blue-eyed boy Eugene.

The little girl runs forth to him
And jumps clear off her feet;
She knows her papa loves her
For she kisses him so sweet.

This little girl is full of love,
She is full of life and light;
She never goes to bed without
The parting words — Good Night.

I've told you of his little girl,
His little fairy queen:
List now, and I shall tell you
Of his little boy, Eugene.

There are two little eyes of blue
And a heart that is always clean;
In this one little soul he loves
Of his little boy, Eugene.

He's a shining light through day
Greater than all earth he weens;
And he never forgets his prayers
Does his little boy Eugene.

When his father sits in a chair
The boy looks at him so keen
On papa's knees with both eyes peed
Slumbering is his boy Eugene.

THE TROLLEY CAR.

I have such funny feelings
When I board a Trolley Car,
In our chief Ohio city
Which is known both near and far.

Sometimes the car is jammed and packed;
The seats full to the end;
And not quite standing room for one,
Not room for one to bend.

The "Con" he won't forget the "ticks"
He speaks so loud and clear,
Fare, please! Fare please! Cling! Cling! Click!
To him that's very dear.

Sometimes it's very tiresome
To hold onto the straps;
But still the people pile on.
Says "Con": *"Close up the gap!"*

His car is never crowded;
"Step forward!" is his cry.
You push and squeeze together
And could but swear. Oh My!

Now when the "Con" has all the fares
And sure he has them all,
He elbows to the rear end,
Then some more streets he calls.

Sometimes he calls them loudly,
Sometimes he calls them low,
Sometimes he calls your street — 'tis past!
Nobody knows, no, no.

And even if you get a seat,
It's very hard to hold:
Some lady sure steps on your feet,
Excuse me, sir! they say. (I'm told.)

To make this little story short,
As to the end we taper:
If you wish to hold a street car seat,
Keep both eyes on a paper.

KANSAS CITY FLOOD, 1903.

From Lincoln, Nebraska, on May 25,
Comes news of a cyclone, just out a few miles.
The village of Pauline, by fierce winds was stormed;
Six people left dead on that furious morn.

The buildings were wrenched from foundations strong;
Left woe and devastation in Pauline's small throng.
Next, Norman, another town struck by the same,
Left seven, all told, dead in wind and in rain.

Many towns did it strike, throughout this broad land.
By its plunder and blunder, left death by its hand.
Our sweet home, Ohio, was not entirely forgot;
With destruction it bore us forget-me-nots.

We heard from old Kansas on May 29,
From the town of Topeka, on the 'Kaw' River line.
The river is rising inch by inch every hour,
Soon lives in that district will lose all their power.

Next the thunder! then started its groans to resound,
With glittering flashes of lightning all round,
The rain then poured down, with a pattering thud,
And we are left on the scene with death and the flood.

Many dead, floating bodies, marked unknown were found,
Who had lives, just as we, before they went down,
A mother found drowned with her last breath she gasped,
"I'll never give up," died with child in her grasp.

Kansas City's flood will never grow cold,
For it brings back memories of Noah's Ark, old,
Not a sign of an Ark to escape in was there
Left to the Almighty, to God and His care.

The crisis has passed, danger's line has been crossed,
Though many a heart bears the burden of loss —
Some, mother; some, father, sister or brother gone
From this world to another, without funeral or song.

So it is through this life, as onward we go.
Let us try to do good on humanity's road,
When our time shall have ended, we will rest with sweet peace,
By God's mighty power, our souls be released.

THE WAUCHITA.

There's a river in the Southland,
As clear as the sunshine in June;
It flows 'neath the beautiful heavens,
Flows neath the clouds, when gloom.

When the lucid sun is shining,
When the stars are gone to sleep,
It runs with a rippling murmur;
All through the day long, it creeps.

Moss covered trees that border
On each side of this crystal stream,
Wave their blossoms to the sunshine,
Cheer tears of the dewdrop, it seems.

The branches of old weeping willows
Tip the water's surface edge;
And it runs on unmolested,
Runs on past the cane and the hedge.

There's where in youth I was happy,
Where I spent joyful days of my life;
'Way down South — on that river,
No worry, no care and no strife.

The name of this river I mention,
Is known as the old Wauchita;
Yes, many an evening I've watched her
As she glided before the boats prow.

And well do I now remember
The bunks on the old Sterling White;
The main and the boiler and monkey,
Those decks were a curious sight.

Above — on the hurricane, stilly
Sat the shaky old pilot hall.
The bells were always kept clinging
When they ding donged their signal call.

The side wheels were always so clumsy,
But without a mistake as to might;
For the water they splashed, 'twas a wonder
How we all stayed aboard Sterling White.

This river still flows with its grandeur,
Full of life, full of shoals of gar
Under water, five feet, you can see them
While they canter and play by the score.

Pleasant days of the past are all over,
These days I shall see never more;
They've past, they've past, they've past, they've past.
Future days shall not be lorn.

BUTTERFLY LIFE.

A little egg is laid
Upon a leaf of green;
When all the air about
Is silent and serene.

Then comes the life, so short,
——For life it yearns;
And soon becomes a weaver —
A hairy, wooly-worn.

He toils through summer days
With patience — on a mission.
To please the buyers of his work,
To brighten window visions.

Always on a shining leaf,
At work, he's found;
Never gazes on the earth
Nor breathes a frown.

Not even does he sigh:
Though gain is loss —
But toils without a grief —
Knows not his cost.

When days of sleep come on,
He's in his nest;
All spun and wove and wound
In silken vest.

Shaped like the moon
In her last quarter:
And in a stillness —
From our eye-lit sight
All wrapt in silk.
With threads so neatly woven,
The silk-worm rests in peace
Through winter's night.

When spring time comes
The larvæ wakes;
And from dark casing
To the light it breaks;
The wings are closed —
Is that dear life deposed?

The sun beams on the sight —
The butterfly has made its flight.

RAIN DROPS — ROUND TRIP.

The day is wan,
Dark clouds come on
When earth below is still;
Above they roar,
As on they soar,
'Bove many plain and hill.

The clouds then break,
The thunder shakes
The rolls have lightning spears;
The rain begins
And mizzles thin,
Then like a torrent pours.

Down hill and dale
Through flum it sails,
With but rain drops to utter
Soft words that cheer
Their lives so dear,
May some day steer the rudder.

They all join one
As on they run,
To watery fields of pleasure;
They flounder on,
As off they bound,
With their own time and leisure.

A creek they meet
And in they sweep,
All bungled up together..
They swell the stream
With bubbles beam,
Until they form a river.

They swiftly glide
On with the tide
Without a care or worry,
They slip and slide
They try to ride
Each other in the flurry.

On, on they go,
So do they grow,
From wee drops, then to rivers,
Till when at last
They give one blow
And tumble into Gulf of Mexico.

The ocean reached
'Gainst hull the screech,
They splatter in the water,
'Till atmosphere
Dries up the *tear*
And draws them back to clouddom.

CORN.

Out in the field there lives
A stalk, so bright and new,
With flags of green —
So bright and clean —
We love them kindly, true.

This plant is ever loved
By poor, by rich, by great;
Without our toil
And labored moil
Its life would be at stake.

From little grains so small,
We hear them as they call;
Through earth they creep —
While on we sleep —
We are coming — that is all.

A horn-like shape is seen
Through broken ground about,
Although so still,
They have a will,
They have a way, they're out.

One tiny root holds fast
The life into the plant;
'Till blades are made,
And earth is laid
Around the limbs so scant.

They strengthen as they grow
When worked by nature's hand,
From stalks so thin,
More roots begin,
Around the lower band.

With roots so thickly set,
Their veins are spread awide;
Growing in grace,
They find a place,
An ear shoots up on side.

A rod grows on the top,
A yellow chaff it furls;
The corn is there,
With silken hair,
And ripe with golden curls.

The tassels on the stalk
Wave to the skies so blue;
By day and night,
They grow in might,
For nature's sake — for you.

MY OLD HOME.

There's a little cottage — yonder
Through the woods not far away;
I was born there and it's fonder
Than all mansions of this day.

I remember when a laddie
As I played in woodlawn — there
The breezes that would pass me
Seemed to drive away all care.

When a youth I loved to listen
To the old folks music sweet,
While the stars at night would glisten
Sweet notes — echoes would repeat.

There's the same old chair in which I — sat
And watched the cows while grazing,
'Till they'd come at evening tide
To fill the pails with rich milk glazing.

In that doorway I have stood
'Till the midnight hours closed;
Till the raincrow in the woods
Shrilled a sound of saddest woes.

Soon it was the old folks left me
Father and my mother dear
Then left alone was I to see
The ups and downs of future years.

Since they have gone, not quite a score,
But time it seems much longer;
I know they've reached the golden Shore,
That blissful shore o'er yonder.

MAN IS BUT MORTAL.

Man is but mortal, no more,
The life is all in breathing;
Man's troubled life is never o'er
Until this earth he's leaving.

Man is but mortal, no more,
Do not misjudge his doings
Why cast him out on danger's shores
Not all are disapproving.

Man is but mortal, no more,
His looks may be deceiving;
But there's a little sparkling core
That burns when good will's leaning.

Man is but mortal, no more,
For great things he is pining;
With might and money and high lore
Man should *not* be decrying.

Man is but mortal, no more,
Why not hold up each other;
Why not on him your good will pour?
For man is mortal and no more.

A DREAM.

I hear a sound!
A sounding sound!
That sounds like sounds all sounding,
Together as they sound the sounds
That sounds like sounds resounding.
Is it the thunder in the skies
That shakes the clouds wide open,
Is it a sound I never heard,
Or is it God's will spoken?
I can not see through frost and fog,
A thing but flashing lightning;
Whence come those sounds — through icy hills
Or from the snowdrift mountains?

All Iceland was in darkness;
But the Eskimoes don't know,
Only dreaming of those icebergs
Made me shake and shiver so.

MY LITTLE PEACHERINE.

There is a little maiden in this town I love;
To me she's brighter than the stars that shine above;
She's not like other girls,
Nor has she auburn curls,
But she's the girl I love, my queen.

She's my little peacherine —
Sweeter than all maidens seen;
I love her dearly and sincerely,
Yes, I love her all the time;
She's my little columbine —
And my heart is ever thine —
I love her truly, she will not fool me,
She's my little peacherine.

When we walk along together, sweet as she can be,
I know there is no other girl on earth for me;
She's always so polite,
Keeps my heart a feeling right,
When in her company.

She's my little peacherine —
Sweeter than all maidens seen;
I love her dearly and sincerely,
Yes, I love her all the time;
She's my little columbine —
And my heart is ever thine —
I love her truly, she will not fool me,
She's my little peacherine.

STEPPING STONES.

We are on the stepping stones,
Lined up one by one;
What shall our harvest be,
When after day has come?

Can we spare our hours?
Can we spare our days?
Can we spare our future years,
With no goodness done?

We, as little children,
All should do some deed,
While we're young and healthful,
Let us learn to read.

Nature as a subject,
Nature as a rule,
Learn to be observing,
Learn in Nature's school.

In this land of beauty,
Don't erase your name,
Other men have conquered,
You may have a fame.

Don't reject the chances,
That you may command,
Though like avalanches,
On you they may stand.

Stand on good foundation,
Step across the stones;
None can ever drive you back,
If you'll stand your own.

Make your will to equal
That of any man;
They may some day speak well,
With a helping hand.

Learn to be your own man,
Learn to be no fool,
Learn to be original
Pattern models never rule.

Never think you know all;
More than any man;
Never think you have all
That's not in your hand.

All that you may master,
Do it with a will;
All that you may conquer,
Never let it spill.

Though your brain be larger
Than the mighty sun,
It can never help you
Without using some.

Catch the sunshine, gentle reader,
As you pass along its way;
For there is a day coming,
When no chance befalls your way.

Let us live and let us learn;
Let us labor, let us earn.
Short is time on earth of sin,
Let us try now to begin.

IT PAYS TO LOOK BEHIND.

It pays to look back, sometimes,
As we journey on life's way;
If your road is full of progress
It pays to look behind.

It pays to look back, sometimes,
Some knowledge you may lose;
Regain it by the wayside
It pays to look behind.

It pays to look back, sometimes,
Danger may be lurking near;
All through life's path of daily strife,
It pays to look behind.

It pays to look back, sometimes,
Some faults you may discover;
Put them aright and travel *slow*,
It pays to look behind.

It pays to look back, sometimes,
Wherever you may go;
Don't keep your eyes always to the front,
It pays to look behind.

It pays to look back, sometimes,
No life is there unblotted;
If you should be the better still
Don't fail to look behind.

TIME.

Time is the great wheel of ages
That travels with never a stop.
Time knocks — only once — on the pages
For us, as it does on the clock.

In youth never spend your time idly,
Let the minutes, and hours, and days
Be hitched with some little bridle,
Some knowledge time can't take away.

Let time travel its journey still onward,
It will travel on past our goal;
But grasp some treasures it offers,
Some deed or some honor extol.

The great monarch — *time* — is fast flying;
'Round, 'round, 'round the world it does go,
While many a youth that has scorned him,
In obscurity bends to the bow. (Death.)

O Time! as you roll by my doorway,
As you roll past my hours in sleep
Shall I, shall I be forgotten?
Or shall I a fair harvest reap?

O Time of ages roll on!
O Time of ages soar
To Time of far beyond us,
To Time of evermore.

THE END.

The day is drawing nearer;
Soon we'll in the earth repose;
Soon we shall sleep in slumbers,
With our eyelids ever closed.

Lift out the deadened embers
From our lives, which, filled with mold
Lie deadened and decayed there,
Like frozen icebergs — cold.

Let our hearts be brightened up;
Let our eyes be lightened up,
Let the stains of by-gone pages
Leave behind no lives corrupt.

The days of play and pleasure
In time will all be o'er;
Then we must lay our burdens
On the brink of earthly shores.

O man, of might's creation,
We come — and then we go
From earthly fields of sorrow,
To where no man shall know.

THE STRAIGHT TRUTH.

I chewed tobacco for many years,
Till my stomach walls were rusted;
I tried to stop the habit once,
But I never could be trusted.

I chewed and chewed and chewed and chewed,
And I just kept on chewing;
'Till I could eat the filthy weed,
The same as cows chew cotton seed.

The other day I got a pack,
Just to take another "chaw;"
The first thing that I lifted out
Was a piece of human "paw,"

Now you may have all of the scrap,
You may take all you can "chaw;"
What cured me was not Quit-to-bac,
But a piece of human "paw."

PARTED BY THE SEA.

Years have come and years have gone,
Since her face I looked upon.

Though she still loves me to-day,
While her form is far away.

I loved her and she loved me,
But we parted by the Sea.*

Of no water 'neath the sun,
Or by mountain's chainy run.

She is where I know not where,
May be where, she does not care.

She is where she cast her lot
She is where I am forgot.

Many times do I rethink,
If the chain has lost a link.

Is it covered with thick dust,
Or is it corrode, or rust?

Can the links e'er be renewed?
Are her eyes on me askew'd?

Has that name in silence wound
Lines across my forehead bound?

Have those recollections dwindled?
Can they never be rekindled?

Are there left no sparkling coals
That would burn as love of old?

Oh, what bliss I have been missing,
Fondling arms and sweetest kissing!

Can those days e'er be regained,
Shall I ever them reclaim?

Is there something seems so near
In that heart I loved so dear?

Or is it the sounding name
That brings thoughts of her again.

Must I live in vain despair?
Shall my arms ne'er hold that spare?

I can not forget those words
Of our parting that I heard.

"Nothing but cold death shall part!"
Was stamped upon our wooing hearts.

Haunting eyes before me run
On my face that I can't shun.

Little hands so soft and warm
Sad to me, they are forlorn.

Love not lost, but like the grain
It shall sometime sprout again.

Though we parted by the Sea,
It shall not be eternally.

Seem'st I hear that old, old song,
Coming from sweet lips along.

"We are lovers loud,
Our hearts our proud,
How long shall it last?
I can never range
Your heart — it may change
Like so many of your cast."

"In the days of old,
We are often told
Of lovers blithe, always,
Until death would speak
And chill the warm cheek
"Of its reddened hue and braze."

"Is your love but a Mart.
If so let us part;
Tho our hearts may one ever be,
One last kiss let me press
On your lips, then I'll rest,
But I cannot my lot cast with thee."

As she stood in idle grace,
While her heaving breast would pace.

With melodious tune she sung,
Back! — The past my vision rung.

Light of heaven on her shine,
Tho I know not of her clime.

In dreams I hear her soft voice swell
And lull, as streamlets of the dell.

So, on the soil of lover's lea,
We parted by unwatered Sea.

But I do not hear her parting song,
To me the bell has lost its gong.

I would gladly sleep at rest
In her arms — were I caressed.

Though she'd fallen like a grain,
On the soil to wait for rain.

Would that I could pour a dew
On that form and make it new.

There would be an episode
Likened to no idol god.

Sweetest flowers bright and fair,
On her bosom she would wear.

On her hair the Marechal Neal
Would rock its pedals, wave and reel.

Diamonds, rubies, pearls and gold
I'd thrust upon her many fold.

But go to her would never do,
While the sea divides the two.
*Matrimonial Sea.

THE NEGRO AND HIS FLAG.

Beneath the mighty face of Sun
Lies a country we all love;
With lands adorned in beauty,
With mortals born to love.

This country is United States,
In it we love to be;
Old Uncle Sam, we love him true,
By *his* flag we were freed.

O Flag of Might! Beneath you
Stand men with fault nor stain;
Who love the peace and freedom
For them, that you have gained.

'Twas Abraham Lincoln's pen that stilled
The curse of blood and slavery;
Negroes in need did die and bleed
To save this flag and country.

A brave soldier never donned
Blue uniform more gladly,
And marched to war, behind the drum,
Nor left his home more sadly.

The *negro* died in war for you,
The stars and stripes he honors,
O flag! He loves to represent
The country he belongs to.

Since his few short years of freedom,
Onward, onward he goes;
As a race and as a nation,
Let his history never close.

He labors in the cotton fields,
On farms, and in the shops;
Instructs in schools and colleges,
His labor never, never stops.

He's gained an honor for himself
Like adamant — unbroken;
On books of fame he stamps his name,
It shall be ever, ever spoken.

Give him the chance that's given
To any other man.
Give him the space and freedom —
Let him show he is a man.

Then down in Southern worn hills,
Where lay the old clay deadened
By steady, steady toiling on
For years and years, till reddened.

Let *negro* votes be cast
On ballots that shall count;
And in North and South 'Olinas
Let the negroes' votes be found.

The Negro's name shall then resound
As thunder on the water:
The sounds will echo earth around
One flag — shall be our motto.

Let all the nations bow to *one* —
The Flag — with inspiration,
Let all the sons live to rejoice
The stars and stripes creation.

And when our days so weary,
Have all been counted and summed,
Under Stars and Stripes and banner,
We shall live as one.

Then let the dear flag cover us,
Whether it be old or new,
Those stars, those stripes — red, white and blue —
Will cover me, will cover you.

CRAZY 'BOUT MY CHICKEN.

There is one thing in this world
To me that is so dear;
It is not money, wealth nor mansion grand.
Not a pretty maiden is it,
Or the sound of music sweet,
But it's chicken that I love —
That holy meat.

'Cause I'm crazy 'bout my chicken all the time;
For that fowl's meat, to me, is mighty fine.
When I'm picking on that breast bone,
You had better let me alone,
'Cause I'm crazy 'bout my chicken all the time.

You may talk about your pork chops,
Your kidney stews, divine,
There's none so good as one I love the best;
Well, the turkey is not in it;
Quail on toast falls in behind;
There's no meat like the chicken
In this world — for mine.

'Cause I'm crazy 'bout my chicken all the time;
For that fowl meat, to me, is mighty fine;
When I'm picking on that breast bone,
You had better let me alone,
'Cause I'm crazy 'bout my chicken all the time.

THAT GAL.

Oh that gal of mine loved me one time,
She called me honey and she treated me fine.
She bought me all my shoes and clothes,
And I spent her money as I chose.
I went away one day on business delay
And forgot my mail to lay away —
When I come back she had my clothes all packed —
She done set 'em outside the door,
She didn't give me time to breathe —
Backed away back and rolled up her sleeves
Says — Mr. Coon — you leave, for

Cho. —

I have other fish to fry
You was once my honey boy but now I'll pass you by,
You told me how you loved me;
But that con's got old and stale —
Since I found in your coat pocket that side order mail.

I left that very night, but I looked a holy fright
With my clothes all tore and my heart feelin' sore,
I lived six months at a free lunch stop.
I was missing my *hot Java* and my fresh "pok" chops,
Lost my home all out and down, I said with a frown
Now I see my finish if I don't leave town.
I will to some other climate go
Where these words don't sound so bold:
"You done been here long enough
You can't ring in *no* more bluffs
The pipe of peace to you Ill puff." —

THE MONSTER FLEA.

The flea belongs to the class called the pulcidae. The flea is a nuisance to begin with; you can find the rascal on most any part of the globe — inhabited or uninhabited — wherever the climate is susceptible to his livelihood, for lively is his hood.

Fleas, in some respects, are like people. They are of different kinds. They are of different color. They are of different tribes, so to speak. They are of different nature, different specie, according to the class and climate in which they live. For instance, here in America we have many kinds of fleas. One is the flea that is found on our old "Tom" cat and his family. His nature is to stay on pussy because the fur of the cat hides him from the light; there he rambles down the soft downy fur, without being disturbed and there he lives the life of a nymph until his days are ended in sweet peace or degradation by the cat's mighty jaw, then in silence he remains.

The cat flea is the smallest flea of which I know — I do not deny that there are not smaller kinds than the feline kind, but I don't pretend to give the history of all the fleas in the world, or I would never get them all described, because they are too numerous to begin to count in words.

Another specie of the flea is the dog flea, still larger than the cat flea, and of a more vicious character. This flea sometimes becomes of such a numerous majority that poor "doggie" can't compel them to stay with him, hence they hunt for new quarters and fall upon the next best thing of flesh and blood that comes in their way, for their path is wide and their victims are many.

When the flea becomes discontented with doggie's hairy realm, and begins to explore, then is the time when the disagreeable "insecto" begins his wicked work upon the household beings at large.

Then comes the time, as many of my readers are aware, of flea fighting and flea biting.

There is one thing sure — when this little, quiet creature lays his small, hard shell upon you and puts his little invisible, hairy paw against your flesh and sinks his beak of love into your ruddy skin, it's a sign for you to jump, and he jumps with you. You may stand off the ice man, the coal man, the grocery man, the rent man, and may be the furniture man, but when this little pesky flea lays his hand on you, it's the law, you can't stand him off — N-e-v-e-r-.

You might grab at him, but it's nine out every ten times you miss him, and if you catch the little pest, it's ten to one he gets away. Then — where is he? There are others, but the flea which I am about to introduce to you now is the largest one I ever saw, the greatest, the mightiest and the most grateful of all flea tribes. At least I think so. I think I am the only human being that has ever been so fortunate as to learn so much of this monster flea, though only by a mere accident it happened.

Years ago, when I was traveling through the wilds of Africa, where the sun beamed down on the beautiful river Nile, in Sodan, and with the brightness of a transparent screen, where the great boa constrictor coiled their noble selves into unnumbered clans; where the beautiful bird of paradise swelled its shrilling notes from the cocoanut woods and the fierce African lion, with the

yellow turf covering his kindly face, roared his sound through hollow forest from his untrodden lair, treaded only by foot-steps of his own.

This is where I found myself all alone. In the wilds of Africa, in a big, lonely forest; surrounded by wild animals of every description. Bears, tigers, monkeys, gorillas and badgers; snakes large enough to swallow a twenty-four-horse team and a wagon thrown in for good measure. Snails larger than giraffs, glaring their eyes at me and eating fruit from the top of the trees one hundred feet high.

I was dumbfounded! Was it a dream? Had I been lingering under the impression that I was still on the old American soil, where all, or most of the wild, carniverous animals had been exterminated? No! It was a reality! You, reader, may imagine in what state of curiosity my bewildered frame of mind was. I was daunted! My heart seemed to freeze between my teeth! My lips seemed to quiver to the old familiar tune of "Home, Sweet Home." But that helped me — none! My legs trembled and my whole body shook with fear. What was I to do — be swallowed at one gulp by the cunning boa constrictor? Be put to death by one blow of the fierce lion's mighty paw, and torn to atoms by his vicious and powerful jaw? I had no weapons of any sort; I was perfectly helpless; something must be done and done quickly. I scanned the varmints and beasts that encircled me, I saw one among them that made me think of the old American flea, the resemblance was the same, the actions were the same, for this monster was sitting on the back of an elephant, and as I supposed, sucking this elephant's blood. A thought struck me like this: —

If I could only mount that flea (as I supposed he was; though I had never seen any of so great a build as he was) he might hop with me to safety or to where I would be at more ease than I was at the time being. Well, now, thought I, if I can only get on his back; but if I should happen to fall off. I would be dashed to atoms or be carried away to some place or destination, I know not where. One thing I surmised and that was this: — His sleek, black shell was slippery and to hold a seat, once I was on his back, would be a hard proposition. But it was death either way, so I took the chance of holding on to this creature. Before I got on his back, I knew my move would have to

be quickly made, so I climbed a small sapling which stood near the elephant and having done this, I made one leap and in less time than it takes you to say "go," I was on and gone. For as soon as I had mounted this mighty monster, he bounded away with me on his back.

After I had got a good hold on him, I found that in place of his back being of such a slippery nature as I had surmised, he was covered with little blunt horns, which gave me a good footing and a fair hold.

I breathed a sigh of relief — I had now lost sight of the jungles of old Africa's beasts of prey.

Where I was situated at the time of my flea-mounting proclivity, so to speak, was in the eastern part of Soudan, in the lonely valley of Occar, situated between the two branches of the Nile river proper. The two streams of which I speak are the White Nile and the Blue Nile, two tributaries of the Nile river.

This flea took a southeasterly course and we (the flea and myself) were up in the chilly atmosphere on the first jump and remained in the air for 24 hours.

His first jump took us from Oscar Valley to the shores of Lake Victoria, a distance of 800 miles in twenty-four hours. Just think how I felt. I was too much affrighted to loosen my hold, for I knew the flea was hungry and he would devour me with a will of his own and by his self.

When this monster had settled himself down upon the soil of Uganda, a state bordering on the beautiful and gorgeous scenery of Lake Victoria, to rest his weary self, it happened to be fortunate for me as he was just tall enough for me to reach the beautiful, the sweet, the most delicious of fruits. What felicity! What joy! What mirth! My appetite was satisfied, my stomach was attended to but "I" was not. Still I was afraid to move away from the life-saving friend, this monster flea.

Now, for the first time in all my life, I found out one thing about a flea. I had always had the idea that fleas only hopped. This I now found to be a mistake of my knowledge of fleas. This flea crawled, he ate heartily of a few animals for his meals. A monkey and three cub lions, I counted them and I know it to be a fact. Who can dispute it when I was the only eye witness to the scene? Not a living being!

L. of C.

The next day, after I had spent a sleepless night on the back of the flea, I found myself high above the calm and sultry climate of which I had come in contact the day preceding. We were soaring over the mountain peaks of Kilimanjoro, the highest mount of all Africa, the snowy crests of the peak were very hard on my constitution, but I held on. The jump was a much longer one and of a greater height, which caused untold misery for me, but I still hung on.

We landed on the shore of Mozambique, four days after the flight began. I was hungry again; so was the flea, but as luck would have it, there happened to be a fisherman coming along the shore with fresh fish, just caught from the channel. Sad to relate, but this monster was no respecter of any living animal, even the highest type of animal, which is man.

This monster threw a powder of some kind from his mouth that caused everything about to become as if the earth around us was enveloped in a dense volume of smoke. The fisherman, of course, stumbled and fell, and his fish fell on top of him, except one that flew wild in the scuffle, that one is the one I got, for it fell directly in my arms. The noise it made and the slight jolt on the flea's back caused him to become more vicious. This monster flea spat on the poor old fisherman and washed him into the Mozambique channel and he was drowned. The flea then proceeded to devour the fish which weighed no less than seventy-five pounds. He then laid himself down on the sand to rest again. Well, he laid there and slept for three days without moving. I got plenty of rest and had fish enough to last me for a week or more, but it was a long time for me to be on such a kingly throne without a crown — only the fair sky that hung above me.

Again I learned something of this monster. Instead of jumping across the Mozambique channel, as I presumed he would, he swam across with the alacrity and agility of a racing yacht that knows no fear, with the ease of a wild goose he treaded the waters of the channel so blue, and landed on the Island of Madagascar on the same day. Madagascar is an island in the Indian Sea, separated from Africa by the Mozambique channel. Madagascar is about 1,000 miles from Cape St. Mary, on the extreme southwestern point to Cape Amber on the extreme northeastern

point. Its width is about 400 miles across from Mozambique channel to the Indian Ocean.

The island lays northeast and southwest. We stayed on this island for a short time only, about three hours, as I would judge. It might have been only five minutes, but I was without any thought except one, that was this:

The first chance that I should see to slide to safety on some other quiet spot other than the "flea spot" of which I was a rooster, I would gladly slide. Even if it was on other soil than old America's. But a thought came into by mind that if I held my place as I had, I might perhaps learn something more of the world.

I might learn of more things that I knew not of, and still come out of the many traveling experiences a well versed and well informed adventurer. So I took some more chances.

The flea then took a northeasterly direction through the Indian Ocean, not by foot, nor did he jump. He had performed many feats before, feats that no living being could have caused me to believe if they had told me of them, but I had seen for myself and I knew what this monster had done, therefore I had reasons to believe he would do more than I had already seen.

Friends, believe me if you will, the truth is, this monster flea swam the distance from Madagascar to the island of Ceylon, which is south of India, the distance being more than 2,100 miles, and he swam it in three days without rest or one single stop, and landed at Ceylon with as much vim and unconcerned actions as he did the day he left the African forest shortly before. I looked around and saw the beautiful garments of nature, the trees, the fruits, the swarthy natives and everything seemed to be in a most glorious progress, but the natives, the animals and all living that came in sight of this monster flea, turned their eyes to him with vehement antipathy. Though like all fleas, he saw danger in their eyes, and before he could be done any harm, he gave one bound and was miles away in the twinkling of a serpent's eye. With one leap from the Island of Ceylon to the Island of Sumatra. This leap was made in less than six hours. The distance is over 1,000 miles.

A mighty flea was he. He could hasten his speed in jumping and swimming, or he could slacken his speed by crawling. It was all according to how he chose to go on his way.

After landing with me on the coast of Sumatra, which is about the same length as the distance from the Island of Ceylon to the Island of Sumatra, he crawled and glided with the grace of a tidal wave, until he came to the Strait of Sunda, which separates the Island of Sumatra from the Island of Java, then instead of swimming the Strait to Java (as I thought he would), he jumped clear over to Java and landed on the Island of Australia.

He hopped across this island in the course of one night by making six short stops, thence to the Island of New Zealand.

I now became excited, my thoughts were only of one thing: — How long shall this exploration continue.

I was getting very anxious to quit this monster flea, but I dare not, for before me lay the great water of the mighty Pacific Ocean, many miles from the shore of South America.

And I plainly saw by the direction in which he had his head turned the way he was bound to go, and off he swam.

Taking a northeasterly direction from New Zealand, we passed the sultry climate of the tropic of Capricorn, we passed the Friendly Islands, we passed the Society Islands, we passed the Marqueses Islands, all of beautiful scenery and of untold grandeur; the sweet perfume of sea driven fragrance from the islands was exhilirating and I was still sitting and holding with all my might and main to this monster that I commanded.

When we had crossed we landed on the northwestern coast of South America, on the Cape of Parina, which is over five thousand miles from New Zealand.

After arriving on the coast of South America and without rest he gave one mighty jump and split the winds with his pointed "beak of love," and jumped over the hilly heights of the great Andes mountains. Then came the most delightful ride I ever had or ever expect to have. When he settled himself down amidst the soft zephyrs of the Maronon river, a branch of the mighty Amazon, and assured himself that was in the right direction of his homeward travel, he slowly floated down through the valleys of well irrigated soil and swampy lands to the Atlantic Ocean.

After this monster had crossed the country of South America, and had given me such a great ride, he continued without stopping and went straight on into the Atlantic Ocean.

He then swam across the Atlantic Ocean to the coast of old Africa once more and landed at the Cape of Verde, where beauty shown all around.

Knowing now that I had gone around the globe and also knowing that it was not safe for me to venture any farther, as I had learned much more than I expected to and I thought that I had learned enough, I was now convinced that I had gained some good information and this monster might take me back to the wild and fierce jungles from which he had rescued me and of which I cared to see nothing more.

Now was the time to make my escape; now was the time to quit this monster and now was the time to relieve him of a burden (myself) which he had so greatly favored.

As he stood on the shore of the Atlantic Ocean with his glassy eyes shining like the setting sun on a calm evening (the monster's eyes measured one foot in diameter), and headed toward the valley of Occar from whence he started, I took the chance for my life.

Just as this monster was about to make his homeward bound, I slid, yes, I slid on solid land once more.

I had done the distance I desired to go and further still, but he had not gone the distance he had to go, nor did I care to know his distance, for I was satisfied with what I had seen and also for what he had done for me, although I asked him no more favors, and he got none from me.

I was now at ease. I had encircled the globe, which is over 25,000 miles in circumference.

I had traveled around the globe on a free pass and I rode all the way with this mighty flea as my protector and conductor. I had now struck dry land and when I looked up to see if this mighty monster was still about, I was mistaken — he had jumped, he had risen to a height of over 2,000 feet in the air.

I looked, I gazed, I watched him until he had become as a small particle of ground pepper away up in the clouds. He became undiscernible; I looked but he had gone, yes gone. I took the first steamer out of port for the United States and arrived safe and sound and none the worse for my adventures. I told my friends of my travels and they called me an unmitigated liar.

Friends, do you believe this story?

ARAY—WRITES!

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